

uncorroborated source) was itself broadcast on the word of single uncorroborated source; or that Gilligan chose on 24 September to present the government's assessment as saying little that was new (and claimed that he already knew about the 45 minutes readiness to deploy CB weapons) but subsequently (Mail on Sunday, 1 June) claimed it was "very revelatory indeed".

With regard to the report on the BBC Today programme last Thursday at 0607 (transcript enclosed), can you explain to me how it conforms with the BBC's own producer guidelines, in particular the following three.

1. *"Programmes should be reluctant to rely on only one source."*

At what level was the decision taken to run this story, based on only one uncorroborated source, and to continue to run this story after an official denial, made on the authority of the Prime Minister and the Agencies themselves?

2. *"The authority of programmes can be undermined by the use of anonymous contributors whose status the audience cannot judge."*

What actions did BBC editors and management take to ensure the authority of the Today programme was not put in question by the use of this anonymous contribution? Are you, or the editors of all the outlets which have run reports on Gilligan's claims, aware of the source's professional status, the organisation he works for, his seniority and credibility? Have you, or the editors made any inquiries?

3. *"contributors' credentials may need to be checked and corroborated several times. Documentary evidence may be needed to validate both stories and contributors' identities. It will usually be appropriate to seek corroboration from sources other than those suggested by the contributor."*

Prior to broadcast what actions did BBC editors and management take to ensure the above guideline was complied with? Mr Gilligan's own account of his 'source' in newspaper articles would suggest it was not. Do the BBC have documentary evidence to validate either the story or the source of this item? Did the BBC seek corroboration from other sources prior to broadcasting the story? Did you offer any opportunity for a reply to some very serious allegations being made about the reliability of the dossier produced by the JIC?

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